

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-9 (Canceled).

Claim 10 (New): Particles comprising a core of calcium carbonate and a coating covering at least part of the surface of the core, said coating comprising at least two different coating agents which are applied in at least two distinct and consecutive steps.

Claim 11 (New): The particles of claim 10 wherein a first coating agent selected from the group consisting of alkylsulfates, sulfonic acids, carboxylic acids, their salts and their esters, fatty alcohols, polyhydric alcohols or mixture thereof is applied in the first step, and a second coating agent selected from the group consisting of polyhydric alcohols, esters of carboxylic acids, or mixtures thereof is applied in the second step.

Claim 12 (New): The particles of claim 11 wherein said carboxylic acid is a fatty acid and said polyhydric alcohol is a diol or a triol.

Claim 13 (New): The particles of claim 11 wherein said carboxylic acid is stearic acid, and said polyhydric alcohol is 1,2-ethanediol or glycerol.

Claim 14 (New): The particles of claim 11 wherein said carboxylic acid applied as the first coating agent is a fatty acid and said ester of carboxylic acid applied as the second coating agent is a phthalic acid ester.

Claim 15 (New): A process for the preparation of particles according to claim 10, in which the core particles are first brought into contact with a first coating agent and then a second coating agent is applied to the coated particles.

Claim 16 (New): The process according to Claim 15 wherein the second coating agent is applied in liquid, dissolved, solid or gas form.

Claim 17 (New): A method of using the particles according to claim 10 as a filler.

Claim 18 (New): The method according to claim 17 wherein the filler is incorporated in products selected from the group consisting of rubbers, inks, plastisols, sealants, papers, paints, coatings, pharmaceuticals, foods and cosmetics.